

**Annual Report**  
**Grant No. G-5-98-20-060**  
**Fiscal Year 1998-99**



**Prepared for USDA - U.S. Forest Service**  
**Fire & Aviation Management - Region 5**

**By**

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## **I. State Fire Assistance Program (SFA)**

- A. **Goal.** To provide protection for forest, brush, natural areas, and grassland to the extent needed to hold fire damage below the level at which it would interfere with high-level, sustained yield of products and services from these lands.

B. **Objectives.**

1. Provide fire protection coverage on 3,360,000 acres throughout the State.

a. **Prevention**

**Mission.** To minimize man-caused fires by improving DOFAW's prevention program via training and adoption of contemporary techniques for public education measures.

- i. Carry out the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign, e.g. brochures, posters, signing, etc.
- ii. Participate in fire prevention activities, e.g. Smokey Bear appearances at various parades, schools, farm fair venues, etc.
- iii. Cooperate with County fire and emergency response agencies in the development of a fire mitigation component as part of the El Niño emergency response plan for calendar year 1998.
- iv. Assist the Hawai'i County Fire Department in developing a wildland/urban interface defensible space program.

**Accomplishments:**

*Items i-iv:* Fully attained.

- i. We continued to provide fire safety and prevention brochures statewide to our various ethnic communities. A new "Smokey Hula Girl" poster was also developed and is made available to the public.
- ii. Smokey Bear has made many appearances throughout the state at county fairs, schools, and other venues. Smokey appeared for the first time at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade in Kailua, O'ahu, where his parade float took 3<sup>rd</sup> prize. Smokey was involved with the Honolulu Fire Department's fire prevention campaign during Fire Prevention Week in October, making

appearances at various schools and shopping malls. He made an appearance at the Friends of the Children Advocacy Center's "Chef and Maui Child Food Fair" in cooperation with the Maui County Fire Department. Smokey also appeared with Sparky the Fire Dog at four elementary schools on Kaua'i during Fire Prevention Week. He also appeared at the Kaua'i County Farm Bureau Fair.

- iii. During calendar year 1998, Hawai'i suffered its worst drought in the last 10 years. Wildfires were also rampant during the year. DOFAW assisted the four county civil defense agencies in developing a fire mitigation component as part of the county's emergency response plan that was required of them by the Governor and the State Civil Defense Agency.
- iv. DOFAW has been involved with the Hawai'i County Fire Department in developing a wildland/urban interface program throughout the year. However, the project is still ongoing and DOFAW will continue to work with the county.

**Other Accomplishments:**

- 1) Smokey made an appearance at the Honolulu City Lights Christmas lighting ceremony. This particular event is attended by at least 20,000 people. Smokey paraphernalia was handed out, making this event a "double Santa" event! Smokey also made an appearance at the Pride in Public Service venue at the Department of Land & Natural Resources.
- 2) Maui DOFAW personnel participated in the Moloka'i Earth Day Celebration by promoting wildland fire prevention brochures and supporting the efforts of the Maui Fire Department's prevention education efforts on the island of Moloka'i.
- 3) In cooperation with the Division of State Parks, the Maui Branch DOFAW was able to provide fire prevention material for cabin users at the Polipoli State Park.

**b. Presuppression**

**Mission.** To improve the response and firefighting capability of the DOFAW organization and to integrate fire management as an integral part of natural resource management programs.

- i. Continue to improve and maintain the RAWS capability on Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui, and Hawai'i

- ii. Conduct basic firefighting training statewide, based on Branch needs; collaborate with other fire agencies in the development and use of joint training opportunities.
- iii. Incorporate the Geographical Information System concept including the development of fire maps, fire weather data, and other fire-related matters.
- iv. Participate in the Council of Western State Fire Managers and California-Nevada-Hawai'i Forest Fire Council meetings as well as the Hawai'i State Fire Council and the Hawai'i Fire Chief Association meetings.
- v. Conduct in-house statewide fire management core group meetings as needed to resolve protection issues, consolidate training, etc.
- vi. Continue to manage and use all Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) equipment statewide in accordance with program regulations; conduct onsite reviews; complete physical inventory once every two years.
- vii. Continue to integrate fire protection with other resource management programs, e.g .ecosystem management concepts.
- viii. Cooperate with the State Civil Defense, State Fire Council, and USDA Forest Service to augment fire data gathering and simulation, resource tracking and assignments, supporting technologies, etc.
- ix. Provide funding to the Honolulu Fire Department in order to acquire firefighting equipment to augment their rural fire protection program.

**Accomplishments:**

*Items i-ix:* Fully attained.

- i. Information gathering on Kaua'i and Maui continues. The Maui DOFAW Branch is continuing to monitor fire weather data in cooperation with the Hawai'i Commercial & Sugar Company (HC&S) and the U.S. Forest Service. Data obtained from HC&S is used to compile NFDRS indices for the Kula Forest Reserve.
- ii. A series of basic and specialized training was done statewide over the course of the year.

An S-205 course (Fire Operations in the Urban Interface) was held on Kaua'i in November, 1998. The course was taught by Mr. Jack Minassian,

Fire Management Officer for the HI Volcanoes National Park. Participants included personnel from DOFAW, Kaua'i, Maui, Hawaii, and Honolulu Fire Departments, and the Pacific Missile Range Facility from Barking Sands, Kaua'i.

An advanced wildland fire investigation course was held in March, 1999 on Maui. Personnel involved in the training included members of the Maui Fire Department, Maui Police Department, DOFAW, and the Division of Conservation & Resources Enforcement (DOCARE). Mr. Patrick Lyng, retired Region 5 Forest Service investigator, headed the training cadre.

A Command & General Staff workshop (I-420) was held on Kaua'i in April, 1999. Personnel from the Kauai Fire Department, DOFAW, Maui Fire Department, and the Pacific Missile Range Facility were involved in the training. Personnel from the U.S. Forest Service Region 5 conducted the workshop headed by Mr. Don Studebaker, FMO from the Cleveland National Forest, CA.

A Dozer Wildland Fire workshop was held on the island of Hawai'i, involving 60 personnel from Federal, State, and County agencies. The workshop was held in May, 1999. The workshop was conducted by personnel from the U.S. Forest Service Region 5 headed by Assistant Director Rusty Witwer from Mather, CA.

A chainsaw class (S-212) was conducted on the island of Hawai'i in June, 1999. This is a very popular class among our personnel. Participants included members of DOFAW, The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii, and the U.S. Army. Mr. D. Douglas Dent spearheaded the training effort with support from Region 5.

Maui Branch Protection Forester Glenn Shishido conducted a basic ICS class for the Maui DLNR personnel.

- iii) Fire maps were updated and digitized over the course of the year. This was also an opportunity to update our mutual aid agreements with the various county fire agencies. The digitized information was made available to the State Civil Defense Agency as well as the Pacific Disaster Center.
- iv) DOFAW State Protection Forester Wayne Ching attended the Western State Fire Managers meeting in Salt Lake City, UT in late March 1999. Issues that affect the 17 western states as well as the western Pacific

territories were addressed at this meeting. Issue papers were written and presented to the Council of Western State Foresters in late May 1999. During this meeting, Ching was elected to serve as Vice-Chair for the next two years beginning in October 1999. The Vice-Chair will then serve the following two years as Chair. The next meeting is scheduled for April 9-11, 2000 at the Kaanapali Beach Resort on Maui.

State Protection Forester Ching also attended the California-Nevada-Hawai'i Forest Fire Council meeting in Sparks NV in October 1998. A presentation on Hawai'i's fire season was done to a very receptive audience.

The Hawai'i Fire Chiefs' Association annual meeting was held on Kaua'i in November 1999. Three DOFAW personnel were able to attend the meeting. A presentation was made by State Protection Forester Ching on DOFAW's fire program and what issues we have to face "Beyond 2000".

- v) The annual Fire Core Group meeting was held on February 16-17 1999 on the island of Hawai'i. The DOFAW Cadre spent two days reviewing the fire program which included the budget for FY00, accomplishments, training, and the review of cooperative partnerships with our agency counterparts. Assistant Director Dennis Orbus was also able to attend and he led discussions on the federal budget.
- vi) In-house inspections were conducted statewide on the FEPP equipment. Screening of equipment was done periodically at the Barbers Point DRMO on O'ahu for excess personal property. During the fiscal year, DOFAW acquired five - 1/1/4 ton cargo trucks, two 5-ton cargo trucks, 20 flight helmets, one 5-ton diesel engine, one Model 42, and 3 slip-on units for an acquisition value of \$329,958.
- vii) DOFAW staff reviewed over 100 environmental assessments, EISs, conservation district use applications and film permits. Comments and recommendations were made to these reviews to ensure fire issues were identified and resolved before approval is given.
- viii) DOFAW participated in the annual Makani Pahili (Hurricane) exercise which is conducted by the State Civil Defense. Various local, county, state, and federal agencies are involved in this important exercise. This exercise is a measuring stick on where we stand in disaster preparedness.

Throughout the year, the Region 5 Fire & Aviation Management office is kept abreast of the DOFAW fire program through electronic mail, reports,

and other means of telecommunication. Fire data is gathered and sent to the Region office for use in the national reporting system.

- ix) The City and County of Honolulu Fire Department was the recipient of the Volunteer Fire Assistance grant this year. Personal protective gear and hoses & fittings were purchased. [see Section II - VFA in this report]

**Other Accomplishments:**

1. DOFAW personnel attended the Drought Mitigation Seminar in Hilo in May 1999. Several presentations were made by DOFAW.
2. DOFAW personnel attended the Pacific Disaster Center's Emergency Managers Users' Conference and provided input for the management of DOFAW's wildland fire program.
3. Fire planning was completed for the Kanaio and Ahihi-Kina'u Natural Area Reserves on Maui.
4. As a result of the Advance Wildland Fire Investigation course taught in March 1999, Maui DOCARE personnel conducted a wildland fire investigation in May 1999 on the Makiwa Gulch Fire. The ignition source was found. The case is now headed for the State Attorney General's office for prosecution. Three investigations were done on Kauai and one was done on the Kawela Flats fire on Moloka'i in August 1998.
5. DOFAW received five Model 5 engines from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). These are the first ever true engines that DOFAW has acquired. Mr. Jay MacDonald held a one-week training class statewide on the maintenance and operation of these engines in December 1998.

**c. Suppression**

**Mission.** To suppress wildfires in a safe manner and at a minimum cost consistent with land and resource management objectives and fire management direction.

- i. Continue to gather statewide fire data and add to the existing database for data analysis and reporting fire history for each Branch.
- ii. Respond to each wildfire incident in a timely manner with appropriate forces as mandated by the provisions of the Land Fire Protection Law (Chapter 185, Hawai'i Revised Statutes).

### **Accomplishments:**

*Items 1-2: Fully attained.*

- i. During FY99, 160 fires were reported statewide totaling 21,948 acres. Nineteen fires were reported on Kaua'i, 15 on O'ahu, 63 on Maui, and 63 on Hawai'i. Natural resource damage was estimated at \$49.1 million.
- ii. The State of Hawai'i continued to have a very busy fire season this fiscal year. DOFAW was involved in several large fires during the course of the fiscal year. One was the 12,500-acre fire on Molokai and the other was the 3,200-acre fire on Maui. In late August 1998, DOFAW responded to a fire that threatened the community of Kaunakakai, Moloka'i. State and county officials were able to get this particular fire qualified under the FEMA Fire Suppression Assistance program. The fire ended up costing DOFAW over \$250,000 to suppress. The fire also caused over \$43 million in resource damage.

In October 1998 a fire broke out on Maui that closed the Honoapiilani Highway for four hours, blocking major traffic between Central and West Maui. The fire destroyed 3,200 acres.

## **II. Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)**

- A. **Goal.** To organize, train, and equip the Honolulu Fire Department firefighting force to efficiently and effectively prevent, control, and suppress fires in remote areas.

- B. **Activities.**

The Honolulu Fire Department used the VFA grant to acquire personal protective gear as well as hoses and fittings for their various engines throughout the island of O'ahu.





(Above): The DOFAW Fire Cadre take a break during their annual core meeting. (L-R) Wayne Ching, Earl Pawn, Galen Kawakami, Ed Brodie, Steve Bergeld, Glenn Shishido. (Below): Cadre members enjoy a moment of peaceful repose.







**(Above):** Nancy Porter, R5 Prevention Specialist, provided excellent guidance and expertise to DOFAW's prevention program. Here she meets with State Protection Forester Ching to over possible prevention projects for Hawaii. **(Below):** The California-Nevada-Hawaii forest fire council meeting is an excellent way to meet other fire members from different parts of California.







State Protection Forester Wayne Ching visited several aspects of the operation of the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection in October 1998. During the fiscal year, CDF gave five Model 5 engines to DOFAW







(Above): Students work a "line" during the Wildland Fire Investigation workshop held on Maui in March 1999. Instructors Patrick Lyng, Paul Steensland and Laura Mark-Bailey did an outstanding job. (Below): DOCARE Officer Alana takes a cast of a footprint as part of the lab exercise that was held each day during the workshop.







(Above): Members of the R5 training cadre pose for a picture after a success ICS training workshop held on Kauai. The workshop proved to be quite successful and reinforced ~~the way~~ our partnerships with other fire agencies statewide. (Below): Workshop attendants listen to a presentation.





The dozer workshop, held in May 1999, proved to be one that was well received by the participants. They left with wanting more! Cadre Leader Rusty Witwer (above) reviews the use of the fire shelter with the participants and (below) leads an informal "operational" briefing.







(Above): The Honolulu Fire Dept. received one of the engines. Fire Chief Attilio Leonardi receives the keys from O'ahu Branch Manager Patrick Costales and DOFAW Administrator Michael Buck. (Below): HFD personnel stand at attention during the blessing of the engines.







In November 1998, five Model 5 engines were delivered to DOFAW courtesy of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. A Hawaiian blessing was held to welcome these engines to Hawaii.







(Above): Joan Yoshioka bucks a tree after falling it. Joan was the first woman in Hawaii to have participated and be certified as a cutter. (Below): Steve Bergfeld proceeds to cut a standing dead tree. He takes safety measures by looking up to make sure that no dead limbs will come crashing down on him.







(Above): The training cadre pose for a picture with members of the DOFAW fire cadre. (L-R) HI Protection Forester Steve Bergfeld, Rocky Opliger, Rusty Witwer, Tony Duprey, State Protection <sup>Forester</sup> Wayne Ching, and D. Douglas Dent. (Below): The Class of 1999. The chainsaw workshop has to be one of the most popular and most successful workshops ever held.

